

Memorandum

To: Chery Chrusz, Planning Coordinator

From: Richard Bartolone

Date: April 25, 2023

Subject: Harlingen Associates, LLC

Case PB-03-2023

Block 6001, Lots 33, 34,34/01, 35, 35.01, 36

Preliminary & Final Subdivision and Site Plan

Landscape Review

As requested, this office has reviewed the plans prepared by Van Cleef Engineering Associates, LLC, dated 1/17/2023 revised 3/10/2023 for the above referenced application. The following comments are offered for your consideration.

1. The property contains 22.1891 acres. Township Code Section 16-5.d.3 requires the installation of 14 shade trees per gross area for all residential and commercial development. Based on the Township code requirements, 22.1891 acres x 14 trees per acre would require the installation of 311 trees. The applicant has requested a design waiver to allow the required quantity of trees to be installed based on the *proposed acres of development*. Clarification of this term shall be made as the *limits of disturbance* are utilized to determine the planting requirement. Do the *acres of development* include the area proposed for the installation of the sanitary sewer force main extension to Stone House Court and the pond constructed wetland outfall easement area?
2. The applicant has proposed the installation of 187 trees based on the proposed development area of 13.32 acres area. The requested waiver is acceptable only if the proposed trees are utilized in the general planting of the development. The applicant shall identify the number of proposed trees that will be utilized as street trees and buffer trees and be aware that trees in these categories do not count toward the required tree planting quantity.
3. Township Code 16-5.6d.15 requires the installation of street trees at 50' on center spacing along all roadways. The note on the Landscape Plan-North, sheet #36 referring to this requirement identifies 925 linear feet of roadway frontage and 19 proposed street trees. It is unclear where this designation of road frontage is located as it clearly does not include all proposed streets in the development. Street trees for the entire proposed roadway system are required.
4. There is a 450' long and 27' wide area along the southern portion of the property along Route 206 that appears to be beyond the limits of the property (possibly the extended right of way for Route 206). Tree removal, site clearing, and tree planting have been proposed in this area. Clarification of the ownership and acceptability of the proposed actions should be made prior to the acceptance of the landscape plan.
5. Considerations should be made to leave a 30+/- foot-wide natural buffer along the Route 206 frontage. The applicant has proposed site clearing and the removal of approximately 25 trees in this area. The suggested natural buffer would preserve the existing trees,

provide an immediate visual buffer and maintain the rural character of the Route 206 corridor. The applicant should also consider utilizing the alternate Township Street Tree planting option and locate the required street trees in an informal design in lieu of the standard evenly spaced street trees and utilize evergreen trees instead of or in addition to the meandering drifts of mixed planting in the area between Route 206 and the proposed structures to buffer the view of the proposed development.

6. Consideration should be given to relocating the proposed dog run identified to be installed in the northwest corner of the property. The retention of the existing vegetation and retaining the 5 trees specified to be removed in this area would provide a substantial existing natural visual buffer and screening of the proposed development from southbound Route 206 traffic. The dog park relocation to the terminus of Roadway B would also cluster the development amenities - the proposed tot lot, sitting area and dog park in one location.
7. The sight triangles along the proposed street intersections shall be identified on the landscape plan to illustrate all proposed plantings follow Township standards. All proposed vegetation that interferes with the sight triangle requirements shall be removed and relocated. The Township standards do not allow plantings of street trees within 30' of a street intersection and any vegetation that will exceed 18" in height. General Landscape Note #10 on the Landscape Details sheet #28 shall be corrected to properly list these standards.
8. Plantings Comments:
 - A) The proposed American sycamore is an incredibly messy tree that constantly drops dried leaves, seeds and exfoliating bark. It can also easily outgrow the space provided in a maintained development and its susceptibility to anthracnose which will defoliate the tree on multiple occasions during a wet spring. An alternate tree species more appropriate to the site is recommended.
 - B) *Magnolia virginiana* is not an effective evergreen tree and is typically not even evergreen in Montgomery. A more effective evergreen tree species is recommended.
 - C) Additional species of flowering trees, shrubs and ground cover plants are recommended to increase plant species diversity.
 - D) The specified Shamrock Inkberry and standard Inkberry shrubs do not provide a long-term evergreen buffer as they typically become leggy in despite the description in advertisement and literature. A more dependable and diverse evergreen buffer shall be specified.
 - E) 1070 plants of any one species is not recommended. A more diverse plant palette shall be specified.
 - F) An alternate location shall be made for the American Dogwood trees illustrated to be installed within entrance road island. Dogwood trees will grow too wide for the location (15' to 20'), have a low branching habit and will not thrive in the dry, exposed location. The trees are better suited to be located in protected, partly shaded locations in an open area of the site.
9. Landscape Schedule note # 2 is incorrect. Tree caliper of existing trees is measured at DBH – 4 ½' above grade; tree caliper of proposed trees less than 4" in caliper is measured 6" above grade.
10. The proposed limits of disturbance shall be staked out and reviewed by a Township representative prior to site disturbance.

11. A maintenance plan for the proposed “pond constructed wetland” area shall be submitted. The applicant should be made aware that the success of the proposed plantings and the long-term maintenance efforts to keep invasive plant species out of this area will require a substantial effort over a period of several years. Previous installations of this type have proved to be difficult and have required a substantial amount of long-term maintenance.